

THE PAPYRUS

Wedded 'neath Hebrew awning, buried 'neath Hebrew sod,
Between not a dream of duty, never a glimpse of God;

Risking our lives for our countries, loving our nations' flags,
Hounded therefrom in repayment, hugging our bloody rags;

Blarneying, shivering, crawling, taking all colors and none,
Lying, a fox, in the covert; leaping, an ape, in the sun.

Tantalus-Proteus of Peoples, security come from within!
Where is the lion of Judah? wearing an ass's skin!

Hear, O Israel, Jehovah the Lord our God is One,
But we, Jehovah—His people—are dual and so undone.

ISRAEL ZANGWILL.



The Blighting of Our Barbizon

IN the little hamlet of Lyme, in Connecticut, there were this autumn assembled in exhibition two dozen landscapes. Having seen this little handful of paintings one has seen, I fancy, what will prove among the most notable landscape canvases to be shown in town this winter. Last year, when first this summer exhibition was attempted by the artists summering in Lyme, the canvases so shown in the region of their making were later the ones that took most of the town's honors. The pictures that have now been shown in the Lyme library, in the first week of September, are fairly likely to repeat the successes of their forerunners of 1902. Meanwhile it may be interesting to consider the present state of this little artistic colony, and the chances for its survival. It is because those chances are so slight, chiefly, that the matter is of more than usual attractiveness. Good as this year's pictures may be, the beginning of the end is already in the air,

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even of that placid hamlet. That placid air, in truth, has already been too much disturbed. It is time this lovely village went to sleep again. The Barbizon nimbus sits uncomfortably upon it; the Barbizon legend is too fatally an incubus.

Picture to yourself the most placid of New England villages. Placid, and jealous of aught threatening disturbance of that placidity, a placidity compound of self-satisfaction, pride and torpor. This village was not as other villages are; with Fairfield, in the same State, it laid claim to an aristocracy unequalled in the North. It was, to be fair, an aristocracy in which millions played absolutely no part. It shared with the old Knickerbocker type a contempt for mere money. If some of the Knickerbocker blood tasted of hides and furs, so did the villagers of King's Lynne, in Connecticut, pride themselves upon the possession, in lieu of blood, of a fluid, part whale-oil, part rum. The days of the whale-oil, the rum, and the shad fisheries now loom remote; it is a case of "Oh, no, we never mention her," and our lips are now forbid to speak that once familiar name; but as those actual activities have receded, more spurious memories have been sedulously revived, until now the Legion of Honor is not more frequent in France than the badge of a Daughter of the Revolution, of a colonial dame, and their kind, in Lyme. Whether one chose to be impressed or amused by these little assertions of aristocracy—assertions that in an older aristocracy would at once mark the mere climber!—whether one listened devoutly or grimly to family records that invariably emphasized the Mayflower and omitted the beachcombing data, one still could not, with the worst intentions, move much in this atmosphere without saving some sense of an actual, if somewhat faded and pathetic, aristocracy. Faded, redolent of lavender, old lace, rose-jars; yet indisputable. Here were no vagaries of our metropolitan aristocracy; no fads and foibles disturbed this calm retreat of a few patricians. In town the smart set might flare and blare ever so noisily; such ephemeral, conspicuous, world-

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liness was not the Lyme translation of aristocracy. In Lyme one did not have to give clambakes, dinner-dances, cotillions, to build palaces, keep turbine-yachts and automatic devils. One was aristocratic merely by living placidly, by leading a calm, contemplative life, an innocent, unintellectual version of Walter Pater's pose; one frowned upon such disturbers of patrician repose as macadam roads and motor cars. One sauntered to the post-office; one gave a tea; one smiled benignly at the young ladies getting their final educational touches (chiefly in the art of living aristocratically) in the Lyme version of Farmington.

Had this village not been picturesque as well as patrician, it had never been disturbed from its splendid serenity. It lies, however, in a region that, while slightly typical of the "abandoned New England farm" region, is also indubitably good to look upon. It is the sort of landscape that inevitably appeals to the painter; bits, so-called, abound; marsh and river and Long Island Sound blend with wood and field and grey crags. It is as if Nature had declared that while she would do nothing grand here, she would sprinkle the whole region with such glimpses of trees and meadows, and atmospheric effects upon the Connecticut river, and the Sound itself, as would make any artist's hand itch. The appeal to artists was the quicker, inasmuch as the paintable "bits" were too absurdly accessible; one had but to walk out of one's garden, and there you were. The inevitable happened. Several artists, of national prominence, chose the village to spend their working summer in. At first, for a year or so, all was very well; the contact between the artists and the aristocrats was not too close for comfort. But what happened to Barbizon had to happen here. Last year, with the first exhibition in Lyme itself, of the work there painted, the evil seeds were sown. There came publicity; artists and aristocrats seemed suddenly to divine profit in closer communion.

Out of that closer communion has come, I fear, the flower of decay. For, just as I once signaled to the world this American Barbizon, so I must now, with however much

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of regret, signal the passing of the Barbizon period for Lyme. It is, perhaps, just as well. The present artistic debauch is certainly too vivid to last; each year of its lasting would make for the eventual decay not only of what art, but what aristocracy, has flourished in Lyme.

Aside from what worse may yet come, the present is sufficiently disquieting. The placidity is gone; the aristocrats vie feverishly in social functions for and with the artists; the artists move in a suffocating atmosphere of students, shop-talk and rivals. Where once the actual, accomplishing artists fitted soberly into the scene, wearing shooting togs, or such other raiment as any English-speaking, country-living aristocracy might wear, the ways and fields now reeked with the Rotten Quarter cravat, the sloppiness of the female art-student, and the face of the seventeen-year-old youth upon whose chin an Imperial drooped. Where once you went placidly into serene gardens, whose Scheme of Things went no farther than the perfecting of the Sweet Pea to its *Nth* beauty, you now found yourself rudely irritated by clamant drawing-rooms full of art, artists, aristocrats, and their commingled conversation. Where once you had been able to gaze, in solitary content, upon such color effects as Nature had here lavished, you were now unable to walk a mile without finding, in the foreground of any bit of color you pleased, a male or female uneasily occupied about an easel.

Let it not be thought that this is a merely ironic, or a prejudiced view. It is but the clear, candid, exposition of what, in the apparently profitable present, is nevertheless inevitably making for the decay and fall of Lyme as a conspicuous artistic centre. There may always be artists there; some of them, indeed, as Mr. Louis Paul Dessar, and Mr. Arthur Dawson, have bought country places near by. But it is the conspicuousness that has worked fatally, and that must cease. Some of us heralded last year's show so bravely; Mr. Frank Du Mond planted his summer-school in the little village so relentlessly, that, in a twelve-month or so, the mischief has been done. That it is done, if you will not

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believe the gloomy picture I have tried to draw of the past summer's unnatural liaison between art and aristocracy, the pioneer artists of the colony are the first to admit. Said Mr. Henry W. Ranger to me, as we stood in the Lyme library the other day, among the pictures and the aristocrats, "I came here for repose, for quiet, for work. It was all right for a year or two; now there's altogether too much social business. Sixteen of us lived comfortably in a house that now tries to hold thirty." Mr. Ranger, indeed, has been painting as much in the other villages as in Lyme, this summer. In his case, doubtless, the best of the honey has been sipped. Surely there are not many fields, or glades, or sea and sky-scapes in that district that he has not by now depicted with profit. It is the pioneers who will first find the crowding, the rivalry, too irksome; yet it is the pioneers who have most profited. I happen to know that the first of these summer-exhibitions, last year's, was arranged sheerly by the village library committee; the artists went into the plan very condescendingly. It was the artists who were astonished when they found that they had sold many canvases at good figures to art-lovers from New York and Boston. It was the artists who asked, thereon, forgetting their aforesaid condescension, "Of course you'll hold another show next year." The show has been held; for three days the trains of the New Haven railway have been thick with patrons of art and aristocracy, in whose delightful pose there has been no flaw more amusing than the inevitable habit of saying: "I know it!" where other mortals merely say "yes;" for three days what remained in Lyme of peace and repose has been murdered to make an artistic holiday; we have seen what may prove to be the landscapes of the year; yet none the less it is the beginning of the end. For one thing, the pioneers are wearying of the over-emphasis on art; for another, the place is painted out, as any place must be after a few years; for another, a show of landscapes in the midst of the actual landscapes is doomed to impermanence.

If the last reason seems obscure, let me explain more

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clearly. In town, amid sky-scrappers, subways, and smoke, a painted landscape is a relief; even criticism must soften its terms in such circumstances. But look at the canvas article, where you see the thing as God made it, and how, in the name of logic, can you work up a rapture? Only a hairsplitter in technics could do it. I am, I hope, no such person. If I am unable to be wildly enthusiastic about this score or so of the year's first-fruits in landscape painting, it is chiefly because I am too familiar with the scenes painted. It is useless to deny that some of the canvases are bound for public favor later in the year. Notably the canvases of Henry W. Ranger and W. H. Howe. Both of the Rangers are labeled merely "Landscape." The more brilliant performance is a wood scene in brilliant autumn browns and greens. The paint and light positively sparkle; it is one of this painter's most brilliant effects. There is a fallen tree in the foreground, a pool shines beyond; trees arch over all. The blot on this canvas is the too harsh definition of the fallen tree's outlines; it is an effect of pure paint, not nature.

The other Ranger is a bridge and marsh and creek picture in greys and greens; there are several of these painted bridges in this small show, one of them by Childe Hassam; this has the usual woolly effect of Mr. Hassam's grey and green compositions. Just as bridges abound, so do sheep. W. H. Foote has some sheep on his "Meeting House Hill;" in key with the rest of the canvas, these are green sheep; rather a novelty, one thinks. Mr. Louis Paul Dessar shows some sheep on his "Upland Pasture;" plush sheep these, worked in a straight up-and-down pattern; Mr. Dessar's "Early Moonrise" also shows sheep, woollier than ever; portions of the wool straying off into the trees, the water and the moonlight. Ploughing is done conventionally by Gifford Beal, his horse being weirdly splashed with scarlet on its hoofs; one turns gladly to the other plough-scene, W. H. Howe's "Fall Ploughing." In this, as in his two other canvases, "On Guard" and "Return of the Herd," Mr. Howe again marks his eminence as a cattle-painter. The dumb resignation and

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brute strength of his ploughing oxen are positive triumphs; aside from the fidelity of the cattle themselves no landscape in the rooms had better caught the purple rim of that region's sunset sky than his small "Return of the Herd." And in "On Guard" the bellow of the standing steer is almost audible, as is the wash of the Sound upon the shore where the steer's companions chew the cud. Allen B. Talcott shows a "Sunset," of which the least evitable thing to say is that if you can't get a Turner, you can have a Talcott. The conflagration effect is almost as glaring as in that famous corner of the gloomy building atop of Trafalgar Square. Clark Voorhees in "The District School" has chosen the side of a hill against which perch four or five houses, hedges curve in regular lines and waves, the trees are straight; this is the pleasant Dutch convention. Frank Du Mond has given the sylvan business a different twist; under such labels as "The Forest of the King" and "Refugees" he has made his woodland canvases show medieval figures central in the foreground. In the larger canvas there are blues, greys, yellows, reds, somewhat melodramatically splashed on, yet the hint of poetry is undeniable. That hint, too, is in the smaller canvas; one thinks of Hewlett's "Forest Lovers;" to spur such thought is perhaps to have succeeded. The Rangers and the Du Monds make the most striking appeal in this show; but I think it is the Howe canvases that succeed most indisputably. The Rangers are priced three times as high, and there's more of them, I admit, but—well, a large landscape isn't just the easiest thing to live with.

The other artists exhibiting were Arthur Dawson, W. H. Foote, H. R. Poore, Louis Cohen, and Robert C. Minor.

Before and about these two dozen canvases moved art-lovers from New York, from Boston, from the fashionable Pequot colony of New London, and the Hartford colony of Fenwick; the fashion-show in Madison Square Garden was as nothing compared to the Connecticut creations that swished by one another in this atmosphere of art and aristocracy. Yet in all this splendor and sputter I found the note of decay in-

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escapable; across the street was an exhibition of "the younger artists," and serious, if you please, at that; not even the humor of a fakir's show, a splendid chance missed! In my memory hummed the sigh of the real, pioneering artists who had found this place and were now tiring of it; in my ears was the art talk, the shop-talk, the mixed metaphors of the amateur critics—the thousand-and-one desecrations of that one-time home of repose, of the quiet life. The repose was gone; pose triumphed. "What melody!" sighed a colonial dame, gazing upon a painted meadow. A "melodious meadow"! I thought of Vance Thompson, lying upon a sofa, listening to a Chopin waltz and sighing, "Ah, that has profile!" Profiled music; melodious oil-colors; all the rank shibboleth; here it is; in the little one-horse town of Lyme, in Connecticut. Shibboleth, sham, and then—death. But I hope the aristocracy will survive the passing of the artists.

PERCIVAL POLLARD.



Philip Payne has done a strong piece of work in *The Mills of Man*. This book will go if our mushy romanticists have not spoiled all relish for the fiction which is true as reality.

It is now in order to revise Dr. Johnson's famous saying so that it shall read: "The best prospect in life for a Scotchman (of title) is the high road that leads him to Newport."

There is great rejoicing among the tenants and retainers of the encumbered estate of Roxburghe—accent on the first syllable. Three solid millions for an empty title and a Scotch pedigree. Hoot, mon!